

survival of a community's beneficial trees through protection, preservation, planting, and maintenance, as this statement from one municipality's tree ordinance illustrates:

The regulations of this Ordinance are intended to reduce tree canopy loss and implement urban forest management improvements through requirements for tree protection, tree preservation, the planting and replanting of trees and the maintenance of existing trees within the Town of Jamestown. Additionally, this ordinance will establish minimum standards for the design of landscapes so as to improve the community aesthetically, economically and environmentally.

## How to Begin

To retain trees, a community must first address what is causing any loss of trees. Tree loss can be attributed to *natural causes*, such as storms, drought, disease, and insects, and *human causes*, such as conflicts between tree needs and human activity, including development and land clearing for farming and forestry. Local governments must address both natural and human causes to retain trees in their communities. They can begin by doing the following:

- ♦ **Assess and Inventory Trees.** Determine how and when trees in your community are being lost. Look at all activities and factors, including land disturbances (such as development), forestry, farming, fire, disease, age, lack of stand or buffer management, lack of maintenance and replacement, and competition with invasive, non-native species. Incentives to landowners to manage and maintain forested stands years before land is developed may provide quality trees and landscape buffers around future developments. Other factors can affect the quantity, quality, and types of trees in your community. All need to be assessed prior to developing plans and ordinances to retain trees. Conduct a community-wide inventory of trees and their characteristics before developing a management plan and, if resources are available, prior to ordinance development or amendment. This provides baseline documentation on trees in your community for later reference to see if plan and ordinance objectives are being achieved.
- ♦ **Identify Who Cares about Trees.** Examine the needs and wants of all stakeholders in a community who are concerned about retaining trees and regulating activities that may affect tree retention, such as forestry or development. Stakeholders include private citizens and business interests, including realtors, developers, forest landowners, and farmers. Stakeholder input will be used to develop vision statements for what the community will look like in the future and the plans to achieve those visions.
- ♦ **Plan for Trees.** Work with community stakeholders to develop tree retention objectives. These should be included in a community-wide forest management plan, which outlines the types of trees a community wants, where the trees will be, and how the community will care for and protect these trees on both public and private property. Other objectives may include percentages of tree canopy, retention of specific species of trees or trees with significant characteristics, and retention of trees along roadways or waterways to address aesthetic and environmental concerns. The community's vision of how it wants to look needs to be part of this plan.



*Trees are dynamic living organisms that require more than protection to keep them in the community.*